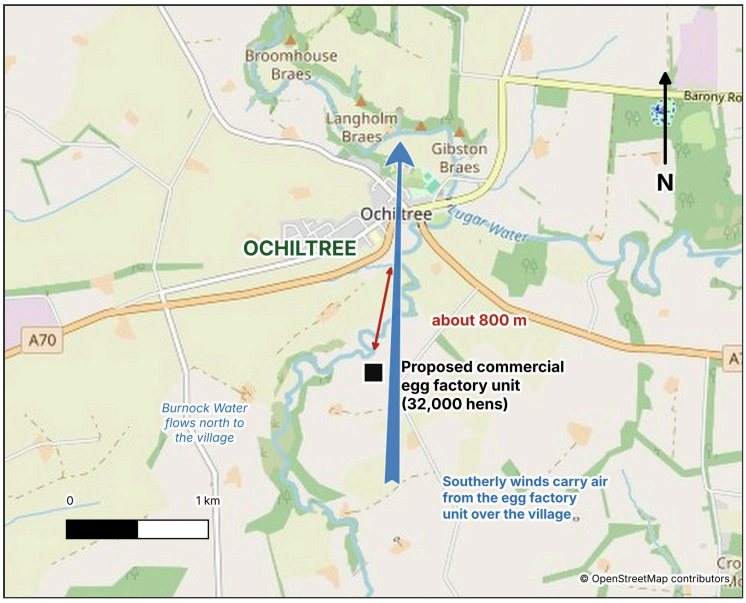
What a 32,000-hen commercial egg factory unit would mean for Ochiltree

A large commercial egg factory unit is proposed about 800 m south of the village, on land north of Palmerston Barn off Station Road (planning application 26/0511/PP).

Have your say by Monday 23 November 2026



32,000
hens in one building

122.6 m
long, longer than a football pitch, with roof extract fans and feed silos

800 m
from the village, with the Burnock Water flowing from the site to Ochiltree

26-32 weeks
of construction, moving about 37,000 m³ of earth

1 Traffic

- **Building it:** up to 8 lorry movements a day during the earthworks and up to 10 a day for concrete, for 6-8 months (applicant's Construction Management Plan).
- **Running it:** articulated feed and egg lorries every week, tractor-and-trailer manure loads twice a week, and 8 artics at each flock change. Staff, vets and fallen-stock collections are not counted.
- Everything uses the A70 and **Station Road**, a single-track residential street, which has no formal passing places. Lorries already run onto verges and use driveways to pass.
- The passing places and sightlines the council asked for are **not shown**. Only construction traffic is kept out of the village; nothing controls the route of the lorries once it's running.

2 Smell

- Manure is taken out of the shed twice a week. That is roughly **1,800 tonnes a year** (estimate), to be sold for spreading on farmland or to an anaerobic digestion plant, so it could end up on fields round the village.
- **Southerly winds** blow straight from the egg factory unit over the village: about 1 hour in 8 in the applicant's own wind data.
- The applicant's model predicts low levels in the village, but it uses regional rather than local weather data for a site in a river valley. Smells are worst on still, damp evenings. It only predicts 2.54 at the nearest house, close to the 3.0 limit.
- **On a warm summer day Ochiltree will be absolutely reekin!**

3 Poultry Dust, air and biohazard

- The fans run day and night, venting **Poultry Dust, ammonia and bioaerosols**: a **biohazard** of airborne bacteria, fungi and endotoxins from the birds and their litter.
- **No Poultry Dust or bioaerosol assessment** has been submitted.
- At 32,000 birds it is **under the 40,000 limit** for a SEPA environmental permit, so no environmental regulator would control its emissions.
- **It would blow over the village:** southerly winds carry it straight over Ochiltree, **the primary school and the Hub**.

4 Bird flu

- The **Scottish Government's own declarations** put a **3 km Protection Zone** round any outbreak, as at Biggar on 2 November 2026. From this site that zone would cover **all of Ochiltree**.
- Anyone with **garden hens or ducks** would have to house them, keep records and could not give away or sell eggs. There would be no bird shows or sales.
- The western edge of the **Dumfries House estate** would be **inside the 3 km Protection Zone**, putting its ducks and other birds under the strictest controls.
- UKHSA rates the risk to the public as very low; human cases come from close contact with birds.

Figures from the planning application documents (Planning Statement, Construction Management Plan, Odour Report, Site Sections) unless stated. Bird flu zones as declared for the Biggar outbreak (gov.scot AIV 2026/22). Map © OpenStreetMap contributors. Continued overleaf.

The biohazard, more impacts on the village, and what we can do

5 The Burnock Water

- The shed sits about 30-50 m from the Burnock Water, which flows north to Ochiltree and into the Lugar Water.
- It is a protected Local Nature Conservation Site and a trout spawning burn. The applicant's own report rates the pollution risk as **High** before mitigation.
- All the roof and yard water goes to one soakaway on the slope above the burn, designed on a single trial pit.

6 Views and landscape

- The roof would be visible from the south side of the village, standing in open fields inside a Local Landscape Area.
- The council's own pre-application advice called it larger than most farm buildings in East Ayrshire and criticised it being sited mid-field, away from the existing farm buildings.
- It would bring an industrial-scale building into open countryside.

7 Noise

- Roof fans run around the clock. The noise assessment only passes if every fan has a silencer fitted.
- The background noise was measured in August underneath trees in full leaf, which makes the fans look quieter by comparison.

8 Better sites exist

- Sites near the existing farm steading would be further from the village, the burn and neighbouring homes.
- No alternative site has been assessed in the application.

☣ A BIOHAZARD, not just “agricultural”

The applicant's Planning Statement calls this development “agricultural” **39 times**. Across all 25 application documents, **bird flu, avian influenza and bioaerosols are not mentioned once**, and biosecurity only 3 times.

- **Airborne biohazard:** roof fans vent bioaerosols (bacteria, fungi and endotoxins), Poultry Dust and ammonia, day and night.
- **Disease biohazard:** H5N1 bird flu is a notifiable disease. One confirmed case triggers emergency zones.
- **Waste biohazard:** roughly 1,800 tonnes of manure a year, dirty water and dead birds to store and remove.

Published evidence on human health

- A Dutch study of 2,426 adults in an intensive livestock area linked pneumonia with living **within 1 km of a poultry farm** (odds ratio 1.7 in one analysis; Freidl et al., *PLOS ONE* 2017).
- Ammonia from livestock farms was linked to **poorer lung function** in people living nearby (Borlée et al., 2017).
- The evidence is still developing, which is why a **biohazard and bioaerosol health assessment** should be required. None has been submitted.
- UKHSA rates the bird flu risk to the general public as very low; human cases come from close contact with infected birds or contaminated places.

What we can do before 23 November

- **Community Council:** lodge a formal objection setting out the impacts on Ochiltree.
- **Councillors:** ask for the application to go to the Planning Committee rather than be decided by an officer.
- **Ask the council to require** a biohazard (Poultry Dust and bioaerosol) assessment, local odour modelling and a traffic plan for Station Road before any decision.
- **Residents:** write your **own** objection, in your own words. Separate letters carry more weight than copies.
- Comment online on East Ayrshire Council's planning portal (search **26/0511/PP**) or in writing to the council, giving your name and address.
- Stick to planning points: traffic, smell, Poultry Dust, the burn, landscape and siting.

Sources: planning application 26/0511/PP documents (Planning Statement 4.12-4.25; Construction Management Plan Table 3.1; Odour Report, AS Modelling & Data, 14 Jul 2026; Hydrological Assessment 4.3; Noise Impact Assessment; Environmental Health response 3 Nov 2026; pre-application advice 26/0006/PAA); gov.scot avian influenza pages (2 and 10 Nov 2026); UKHSA blog (19 Nov 2025). Manure tonnage is an estimate. Distances approximate. Map © OpenStreetMap contributors.